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To assure success in hunting, young men (both married and unmarried) may join together in a small group under the supervision of an older master of ceremony (*uwe*) to inhale tobacco smoke for a three-day period during which they alternate the smoke-inhalation sessions with hunting in the forest with blowguns. During the ritual sessions, called *kumpan*, the men take turns blowing tobacco smoke through gualea bamboo tubes into each other's lungs. It is believed that a man must entirely swallow the smoke he receives in order to be certain that he will not fail as a hunter.

A variety of fish and shellfish is present in streams and 225 •
rivers, but swift currents and the small size of many water-courses seem to limit the degree of emphasis on their exploitation in many localities. Fishing roughly contributes perhaps [164]
only a little over 5 per cent of the total diet, significantly less than hunting. Corvina, suckers, and sheat-fish are taken from main streams and rivers, while crayfish and fresh-water crabs are gathered in the shallows.

Fishing techniques range from simply seizing fish by hand to complex river-poisoning operations. The fish that are caught bare-handed belong mostly to a species (*suruwapi*) capable of fastening itself to the underside of river boulders by means of a suction pad appendage. Hook-and-line fishing is done from a riverbank. Any handy stick is used for a pole, while an iron trade hook is baited with a piece of manioc, ripe plantain, or an earthworm.

A few men possess rectangular throw nets for catching medium-sized fish. A pair of fishermen, or a man and his wife, enter the shallows about ten feet apart. One tosses an end of the net to his companion with a circular motion. As the net is drawn to shore, balsa wood floats support its top edge, while stone sinkers keep it vertical in the water. Good-

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225 sized fish are also caught in deeper waters with a special thin, long palm wood thrusting spear.

225 278 Fish poisoning is undertaken perhaps every few weeks to secure a large catch. Men, women, and children from several neighboring houses usually participate. They select a section of river where it is bisected by an island or sandbar, to which the men and boys construct a low dam of river boulders from one bank. This stone dam is constructed to form a lagoon where the poison can sufficiently take effect in the slowed current. Other men meanwhile build split bamboo grating-like fish traps at several low points on the dam and prepare the fish poison.

[824] Three types of plant piscicides are used: *timu* (in Spanish, *barbasco*), *masu*, and *payal*. *Timu* is considered the best of these, but is used in combination with *masu* for maximum success. Large quantities are required, and the fishermen often prepare six to eight bushel-sized baskets. They pound the plants to a pulp between river boulders and dump them into the water upstream. If all goes well, within twenty to thirty minutes stunned fish begin rising to the surface and float toward the dam. The men who constructed the traps seize the fish as they are washed onto the bamboo gratings. Everyone else, regardless of age or sex, wades into the lagoon and grabs for fish. Each person owns whatever he catches, although he often may give some of his catch to a less fortunate participant. Fish poisoning is sometimes pursued at night because the fish tend to be nearer the surface and therefore more susceptible to the poison. Both poisoning and netting are most effectively conducted during dry periods, when the rivers and streams are low and the current slow.

622 [146] Gathering activities contribute quantitatively relatively little to the diet, approximately 5 per cent annually, but do provide a variety of delicacies to supplement it. Various species